

**U.S. Probation & Pretrial Services Office
Western District of New York
Position Description**

Job Title/Classification Level	Program Development Specialist CL 29
Occupational Group	Professional Line

Job Summary

By statute, probation and pretrial services officers serve in a judiciary law enforcement position and assist in the administration of justice and promote community safety, gather information, supervise defendants, interact with collateral agencies, prepare reports, conduct investigations, and present recommendations to the court. Officer specialists perform duties that involve both general pretrial services or probation cases and specialized types of defendants.

The Program Development Specialist is responsible for the supervision of offenders, coordinating and assisting in the development of outcome driven strategies identifying risks, needs, treatment, and implementing specific interventions that have demonstrated success in reducing recidivism. The Program Development Specialist serves as the district's authority in all aspects of evidence-based practices.

Representative Duties

- Identifies criminogenic needs of offenders relative to implementation of evidence-based practices.
- Develops/coordinates evidence-based programs, including appropriate assessment instruments to identify risks, needs and treatment, cognitive behavioral therapy, motivational interviewing and workforce development.
- Determines and evaluates available resources.
- Participates in planning at the administrative level and provides advice, consultation and program direction.
- Collects statistical data regarding the evidence-based programs utilized in the district and their outcomes to determine effectiveness.
- Conducts investigations and prepares reports for the court with recommendations, which requires interviewing offenders/defendants and their families, as well as collecting background data from various sources. An integral part of this process is the interpretation and application of policies and procedures, statutes, *Federal Rules of Criminal Procedures*, and may include U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, Monographs, and relevant case law.
- Tracks legal developments, and updates staff and the court. Enforces court-ordered supervision components and implements supervision strategies. Maintains personal contact with defendants and offenders through office and community contacts and by telephone. Investigates employment, sources of income, lifestyle, and associates to assess risk and compliance. Addresses substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, and similar problems and implements the necessary treatment or violation proceedings, through assessment, monitoring, and counseling.
- Schedules and conducts drug use detection tests and DNA collection of offenders/defendants, following established procedures and protocols. Maintains paper and computerized records of test results. Maintains chain of custody of urinalysis testing materials. Responds to judicial officer's request for information and advice. Testifies in court as to the basis for factual findings and (if warranted) guideline applications. Serves as a resource to the court. Maintains detailed written records of case activity. May conduct surveillance and/or search and seizure at the direction of the court.
- Investigates and analyzes financial documents and activities and takes appropriate action. Interviews victim(s) and provides victim impact statements to the court. Ensures compliance with Mandatory Victims Restitution Act. Responsible for enforcement of home confinement conditions ordered by the court and performs home confinement reintegration on behalf of the Bureau of Prisons.
- Analyzes and responds to any objections. This may include resolving disputed issues and presenting unresolved issues to the court for resolution. Assesses offenders'/defendants' level of risk and develops a blend of strategies for controlling and correcting risk management.

- Participation in ongoing training and education opportunities to further develop and/or enhance techniques and skills relating to defendants/offenders investigation and supervision practices.
- Communicates with other organizations and persons (such as the Bureau of Prisons, law enforcement, treatment agencies, and attorneys) concerning offenders'/defendants' behavior and conditions of supervision. Identifies and investigates violations and implements appropriate alternatives and sanctions. Reports violations of the conditions of supervision to the appropriate authorities. Prepares written reports of violation matters, and makes recommendations for disposition. Testifies at court or parole hearings. Conducts Parole Commission preliminary interviews. Guides the work of staff providing administrative and technical assistance to officers.
- Guides, advises, trains and makes recommendations to other officers, the court, and other individuals regarding their designated area of speciality. Performs investigative and supervision responsibilities for defendants/offenders with specialized situations or needs.

Factor 1 - Required Competencies (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities)

Probation, Pretrial Services and Law Enforcement

- Knowledge of the roles and functions of the federal probation and pretrial services office, including knowledge of the legal requirements, practices and procedures used in probation, parole, and pretrial services. Knowledge of the roles, responsibilities, and relationships among the federal courts, U.S. Parole Commission, U.S. Marshals Service, Bureau of Prisons, U.S. Attorney's Office, Federal Public Defenders Office, and other organizations.
- Knowledge of how other judicial processes and procedures relate to the officer's roles and responsibilities. Knowledge of federal law and the criminal justice system particularly as it relates to federal pretrial services, probation and parole policies and procedures. Knowledge of surrounding community and available community resources.
- Knowledge of automated/internet resources and systems available for conducting background checks, criminal histories, and other similar information (such as the National Crime Information Center).
- Knowledge of investigative techniques and skill in investigating offenders'/defendants' backgrounds, activities, finances and determining legitimacy of their income. Knowledge of the Bail Reform Act. Knowledge of sentencing guidelines, statutes, *Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure* and applicable case law. Knowledge of changes in the law. Knowledge of techniques in supervising offenders/defendants. Skill in supervising offenders/defendants, risk assessment, and developing appropriate alternatives and sanctions to non-compliant behavior. Knowledge of legal terminology.
- Skill in conducting legal research related to varied complex and difficult legal issues, related to sentencing and supervision. Skill in analyzing and summarizing legal concepts and issues. Skill in legal reasoning and critical thinking. Skill in dealing with violent and/or difficult people. Skill in counseling offenders/defendants to maintain compliance to conditions of their release. Skill in evaluating and applying sentencing guidelines. Ability to follow safety procedures. Ability to compile and summarize information (such as background checks and criminal histories) within established time-frames. Ability to discern deception and act accordingly.
- Ability to organize, prioritize work schedule, work independently with little or no supervision, and to exercise discretion. Ability to work under pressure of short deadlines.
- Knowledge of evidence-based practices. Skill in supervising defendants with specialized needs/situations. Ability to provide guidance to other officers, the court, and other agencies regarding evidence-based practices.

Judgment and Ethics

- Knowledge of, and compliance with, the *Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees* and court confidentiality requirements. Ability to consistently demonstrate sound ethics and judgment.

Written and Oral Communication/Interaction

- Skill in communicating (orally and in writing) and working with judges, attorneys, other law enforcement agencies, and correctional agencies. Ability to interact and communicate effectively (orally and in writing) with people of diverse backgrounds, including law enforcement and collateral agency personnel at different government levels, community service providers, and offenders/defendants. Ability to interview and establish rapport with contacts at collateral agencies, offenders/defendants and their families/support systems, and others for the purpose of supervision and investigation.

Information Technology and Automation

- Skill in the use of automated equipment including word processing, spreadsheet, and database applications, and various other types of software. Ability to utilize computer software and automated systems to perform record checks, record urinalysis results, compile criminal history information, and similar activities. Skill in interpreting and analyzing data from a variety of investigative databases.

Factor 2 - Primary Job Focus and Scope

The primary focus of the job is to fulfill statutory requirements to conduct pretrial and pre-sentence investigations, supervise offenders/defendants, make recommendations to the court, evaluate needs and conditions and maximize compliance for the purpose of ensuring community safety. A proper recommendation to the court maximizes the protection to the public. Society benefits from successful supervision and the use of detention alternatives by saving the costs of incarceration. Often the offender or defendant completes the conditions of supervision and becomes a productive member of the community. The specialized programs developed and managed by the Program Development Specialist aid the judicial officers in making decisions concerning the defendant's or offender's specific needs. Successful management of special needs benefits the offender or defendant, family members, employers, and others in the offender's or defendant's community.

Factor 3 - Complexity and Decision Making

The job involves making independent decisions within the context of professional standards, broad policies, and general goals. Probation/pretrial services officers at this level gather and analyze information to determine or recommend the best course of action. Officer Specialists at this level of function differ from officer positions in that their jobs have greater complexity and require more extensive knowledge in an area of specialization.

Factor 4A - Interactions with Judiciary Contacts

The primary judiciary contacts are other probation/pretrial services staff, judicial officers, staff of other court units, the Administrative Office's General Counsel, and the U.S. Sentencing Commission for the purpose of conducting research and investigations and maintaining accurate and up-to-date information in case files.

Factor 4B - Interactions with External Contacts

The primary external contacts are offenders/defendants and their families, other government agencies, U.S. Attorney's Office, U.S. Marshals, Bureau of Prisons, Parole Commission, attorneys, public safety/law enforcement officials, treatment providers, victims, and other members of the community for the purpose of investigating defendants' backgrounds, obtaining and verifying arrest information, drafting sentencing guidelines, and similar activities. Officers at this level also have contacts with drug and alcohol treatment professionals, mental health professionals, employers, employment training programs, and vocational training programs for the purpose of providing specialized supervision of offenders.

Factor 5 - Work Environment and Physical Demands

Work is performed in an office setting and in the community and may be subject to variable hours, including nights and weekends. Work requires regular contact with persons who have violent backgrounds. These contacts may be made in both generally controlled office settings as well as in field situations, such as uncontrolled and unsafe neighborhoods/environments where illegal activities and violence may occur.